

Highfield Primary School

Address: Marsh Lane, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire, BL4 0AP

Unique reference number (URN): 105182

Inspection report: 6 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The personal development programme that leaders have established is a golden thread that runs through all aspects of school life. Leaders make sure that it is ambitious and purposeful. They have established a well-structured personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Pupils develop a deep body of knowledge about a range of important issues. For example, pupils talk with maturity about complex themes such as coercive control and healthy relationships. They are knowledgeable about diversity, different beliefs and the importance of fundamental British values. Leaders make sure that pupils develop a well-rounded understanding of issues that they might face in life. For example, pupils learn about finance and debt as well as the impact of crime. Adults make sure that pupils learn about their mental health. This work is particularly successful. Pupils benefit from considerable support for their wellbeing. By the time they leave school, pupils have a wide understanding of the world and how to look after their bodies and minds.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to take on leadership roles. Pupils take these roles seriously. Some act as mental health leaders, others as mini-police or school councillors. They use these roles to share pupils' views and help shape the clubs and activities offered.

Pupils benefit from a rich range of experiences beyond the classroom. For instance, they visit places such as castles and historic mills to deepen their learning. These experiences bring the curriculum to life and deepen their learning.

Leaders check pupils' participation in clubs and trips carefully. If pupils face difficulties which make it hard for them to join in, staff provide effective support so that all pupils can take part. All pupils benefit from the wide offer available.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Typically, pupils achieve well. In the early years, children secure the important foundations that they need in reading and mathematics. Older pupils who struggle with these foundations receive effective support that helps them catch up. Teachers usually check for gaps in pupils' knowledge and provide help to close them. In mathematics, pupils attain above the national average in the Year 6 national tests.

In writing, pupils attain as well as their peers nationally. Leaders' work to strengthen the teaching of writing is making a positive difference. In other subjects, pupils typically gain a secure body of knowledge that prepares them well for their next steps.

The attainment of pupils who face additional challenges is typically above that of their disadvantaged peers nationally. This is especially true in mathematics. Pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well from their starting points. All pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance is improving over time. Leaders' checks on attendance are comprehensive. If pupils struggle to attend regularly, leaders take effective action to secure improvements. If pupils are persistently absent, the support that leaders provide is often pivotal in helping them to attend more often. These pupils make rapid gains in their attendance as a result. Most pupils who previously struggled to attend well are now attending more regularly.

Pupils behave well. They treat each other and those around them with kindness and respect. Bullying is very rare. If it happens, leaders take effective action to deal with it quickly. These actions are almost never needed. Leaders have created a school culture in which discrimination and harassment are not tolerated.

If pupils find it hard to manage their feelings and behaviour, leaders skilfully adapt their approach to support them. From the early years onwards, staff provide effective help for pupils who need it. Adults teach pupils a range of strategies to help them to manage their emotions and behaviour. Pupils begin to independently use the strategies that they are taught. Over time, pupils learn to manage their feelings and behaviour well.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum for pupils to learn. They routinely check the impact of the curriculum on pupils and take action to make further improvements where needed. Where leaders focus their attention, their actions are effective. For example, staff teach phonics well, and pupils quickly secure the important knowledge that they need to become fluent readers. Staff are experts in teaching mathematics, helping pupils to make sound progress as a result. Pupils become skilled mathematicians.

In the early years, staff make sure that children learn to form letters clearly and write simple sentences accurately. Staff give older pupils many opportunities to write. However, sometimes, the way staff teach pupils to turn their ideas into accurate writing is not always as effective as it could be.

Leaders have made sure that staff have the subject knowledge that they need to teach the curriculum well. This helps pupils to secure important learning in each subject. If pupils need extra help, staff provide timely support so that pupils keep up. Occasionally, the activities that staff choose do not help pupils to deepen their understanding as well as they might. Pupils sometimes lack opportunities to apply new learning more fully.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise the early years and staff benefit from considerable professional development. As a result, the school's well-structured early years curriculum is consistently well taught. Children benefit from a range of well-considered tasks that help them to acquire the important knowledge that they need for future learning.

If children face additional challenges to their learning or wellbeing, adults provide carefully tailored support. Children rapidly settle into new routines and become ready to learn. Children enjoy the activities that they are given and show real enthusiasm. Children sustain their concentration and focus well on their learning. For example, some children work on creating their own intricate African masks, while others explore capacity by making rose-petal perfume. Children behave consistently well. Adults make sure that children are well cared for.

Adults are experts in helping children to learn phonics and form their letters correctly. Children quickly become confident readers, writers and mathematicians. Staff make sure that children have plenty of opportunities to practise these important skills. Children typically benefit from purposeful interactions with adults that support their language development. Adults provide regular opportunities for children to practise and rehearse their learning. By the end of the early years, children are ready for Year 1 and beyond.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families very well. They use this knowledge to identify pupils' needs accurately. Leaders make sure that staff have the expertise to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils need extra help with language and communication. When this happens, leaders work with external specialists to provide the right support. Staff usually adapt learning well for pupils who need it. However, some targets for pupils with SEND are not as precise as they could be. This sometimes makes it harder for staff to help these pupils in the most useful ways.

Some pupils face additional challenges in their lives. Leaders and staff understand these challenges and provide tailored support for pupils' wellbeing. When needed, leaders work closely with other agencies to help parents and carers. Leaders make sure that support for pupils' wellbeing includes their families. Pupils thrive with this help and quickly become ready to learn.

Leaders use additional funding wisely. They make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND and those facing other difficulties, receive the support they need. This typically helps pupils to be ready for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Governors have a clear and well-informed understanding of the school. They undertake their duties effectively. Leaders welcome governors into school so they can see the school's work first-hand. Governors use their expertise to support and challenge leaders. This helps the school to continue to improve. Leaders make sure that the improvements they introduce benefit pupils quickly.

Governors guide and support leaders by making sure that resources are used to support all pupils. Leaders and governors make sure that pupils facing challenges and those who have additional needs are carefully considered. They make sure that pupils have the support that they need. The investment that leaders and governors make in supporting the wellbeing of pupils and their families is notable. Pupils benefit from high-quality support that helps them to be ready for the next stages of their learning and development.

Leaders provide staff with high-quality professional learning that leads to sustained improvement. They draw on external expertise, when needed, to strengthen staff's knowledge further. Staff value the support leaders give them and appreciate the care shown for their workload and wellbeing. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They act with purpose to secure positive change. Leaders work closely with parents and carers, professionals and the wider community. This helps them build effective partnerships that support pupils' learning and development.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Leaders have established a school culture where every pupil is valued. Pupils know that they belong and can be themselves. From the moment that pupils join the school, staff build a clear picture of each pupil and their needs. Pupils and families benefit from support that goes well beyond the school gate. This support often makes a real difference to pupils' wellbeing. Leaders take effective action to reduce the barriers to learning that some pupils face. As a result, pupils are ready to learn. They flourish through this high-quality support.

Pupils behave well. Staff explain expectations clearly and pupils rise to them. From the early years onwards, children settle quickly into routines and develop positive habits for learning. Bullying is rare. If it happens, leaders act quickly to make sure that it stops. Pupils treat each other with care and compassion because adults model this every day. This shapes the respectful relationships seen across the school.

Some pupils find regular attendance difficult. Leaders carefully identify and reduce barriers that some pupils have to their attendance. While attendance is below national averages, it is improving as a result of leaders' actions.

Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils achieve outcomes in national tests that are above national averages. As they progress through the school, they gain the important foundations they need to be ready for their next stages of education.

Pupils enjoy their learning. Leaders enrich the curriculum with many experiences that broaden pupils' interests. Some pupils learn cookery or sewing, while others take part in boxercise, karate or archery. All pupils develop their music skills, including learning samba drumming. These opportunities help pupils discover new talents and think about their future goals. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic learners in this vibrant school.

Next steps

- Leaders should refine their approach to the teaching of writing so that all staff develop expertise in supporting pupils' transcription skills.

- Leaders should improve the precision of targets that support learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they are fully supported to succeed across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should make sure that the activities that staff choose consistently help pupils to deepen their learning.
-

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Hudson Daniel-Sam.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and senior leaders. They also spoke with some governors, including the chair, staff and pupils. Inspectors also spoke with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.

Headteacher: David Glyn-Jones

Lead inspector:

Jen Sloan, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jake Nicklin, Ofsted Inspector

Nicky Parkinson, Ofsted Inspector

Chris Wilkins, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 6 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

417

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

420

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

25.90%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.60%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.03%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	66%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	63%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	73%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	87%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	86%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	65%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	60%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	52%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	76%	63%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	70%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	62%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	65%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	62%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	82%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	58%	68%	-9 pp
2024/25 (final)	65%	69%	-4 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	67%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	52%	66%	-14 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	80%	-11 pp
2024/25 (final)	76%	81%	-4 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	80%	-10 pp
2022/23 (final)	62%	78%	-16 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	65%	78%	-13 pp
2024/25 (final)	65%	78%	-14 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	78%	-8 pp
2022/23 (final)	62%	77%	-15 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	73%	80%	-7 pp
2024/25 (final)	82%	81%	2 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	79%	-9 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	79%	-13 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	6.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.8%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	21.0%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	23.2%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	22.5%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright